

Wisconsin's Fish & Wildlife Annual Report 2003-2004



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Greetings,

From one hunter-angler to another, I know it is important to you that the money we spend on hunting and fishing licenses is invested wisely in conservation programs we value. That's why I am pleased to once again bring you our annual report on "Your Investment in Wisconsin's Fish and Wildlife." In these pages is a wealth of information ranging from how many wardens we put in the field, to how many fish we stocked on your behalf, to habitat we improved for wildlife, to lands we added for public hunting. The hunting and fishing license dollars you pay are the lifeblood of these programs.

Wisconsin's hunting and fishing are among the best in North America, and that's good not just for hunters and anglers, but for our economy, health and quality of life. Hunting and fishing are a \$4 billion economic engine for Wisconsin. Fishing generates \$2.3 billion in economic impact, including \$90 million in sales, fuel and income taxes and 26,000 jobs. Hunting annually adds \$1.7 billion to the state's economy, generates \$52 million in taxes and supports 19,000 jobs. Healthy ecosystems also mean clean air and water for people and all species, as well as places to go to enjoy healthy outdoor activities.

As always, good conservation requires investments today to assure healthy natural resources in the future. Hunters and anglers tell me they want to protect and continue supporting the investments their parents and grandparents made in conservation -- like the reintroduction of wild turkeys in 1976, which today provide hunting in the fall and spring for nearly a quarter-million hunters, and bird-watching for many more people year-round. Hunters and anglers want to hand off a flourishing hunting and fishing heritage to their children.

Unfortunately, we project a deficit in the state's hunting and fishing license fund by the end of the next state Biennium, so we have proposed to raise some fees in 2005-07. But even with increases, Wisconsin's hunting and fishing will be a bargain. Wisconsin license fees are in line with or lower than other states. Some 17 states already charge more than our proposed fishing license fee; and our neighbor states are at or above proposed deer license increases once all required permits are tallied (Iowa charges \$52, Minnesota \$79, and Illinois \$28.)

I hope this report helps you find out what the department is doing with your money on your behalf. If you don't see some information you need, let us know. The DNR is committed to showing hunters, anglers, lawmakers and others how license dollars are invested in your state conservation programs.

Sincerely,

Scott Hassett

To learn more about how the DNR invests your hunting and fishing license dollars, please visit our Web site at dnr.wi.gov/invest

Wisconsin's Fish & Wildlife Annual Report 2003-2004

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Cover Photo: Successful turkey hunter
by Robert Queen, DNR





Summary

Wisconsin's Fish and Wildlife Account:

Revenues from sales of hunting and fishing licenses and stamps are key to conservation efforts in Wisconsin. This money, combined with other funds such as federal excise taxes from consumer purchases of hunting and fishing equipment, makes up the Fish and Wildlife Account.

The Fish and Wildlife Account is the chief source of funding for the fish and wildlife conservation programs in Wisconsin that are important to you. For further reference, please see the chart on page 5 "*Funds Spent on Fish & Wildlife in Wisconsin.*"

The Fish and Wildlife Account pays for habitat protection, fish and wildlife species management and research, land and facilities management and conservation law enforcement.

This account also pays for services that support these conservation functions, including customer service and licensing, public information and education, computer-based technology services, human resources support, financial administration and regional management.

State and federal authorities routinely audit the Fish and Wildlife Account to ensure that the funding is spent only on programs and activities that support fish and wildlife. Funds from the Fish & Wildlife Account cannot, by law, be spent for other purposes.

Total FY04 spending: This report covers how the DNR used Fish and Wildlife Account funds during fiscal year 2004 (July 1, 2003 to June 30, 2004). In FY04, the DNR spent \$85.0 million on activities that support hunting and fishing in Wisconsin. The department spent \$10.4 million less this year than last year (FY03 total was \$95.4 million). FY04 spending was lower than FY03 in part because of funding reductions affecting the DNR that the Governor and Legislature included in the 2003-05 State Biennial Budget. The department also spent less in FY04 on statewide monitoring to detect the presence of chronic wasting disease in Wisconsin's wild white-tailed deer herd. An extensive statewide CWD sampling effort had been conducted in FY03 that was not repeated in FY04.

Other funding sources

The \$85.0 million the Department of Natural Resources spent in FY04 represents 19.3 percent of the total funds the agency spends on all programs. (For further reference, please see the chart on page 5 "*Funds Spent on Fish & Wildlife in Wisconsin.*"

The Fish & Wildlife Account is part of a larger Conservation Fund the DNR administers that includes funds from a variety of sources. Other funding sources outside the Fish & Wildlife Account that support Wisconsin conservation efforts include:

Boating, All-terrain Vehicle and Snowmobile funds: Provide programs and enforce laws that ensure public safety in the outdoors. These funds also are used to maintain trails, bridges, boat landings and piers that give anglers and hunters access to fishing and hunting.

Endangered Resources funds: Support habitat management for fish and wildlife on about 56,000 acres of state natural areas, many of which offer fishing, hunting and wildlife viewing opportunities.

Forestry funds: Support management of 452,331 acres for habitat, camping, hiking, hunting and fishing.

General tax revenue and bonding (such as Wisconsin's Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program): Acquire land for fish and wildlife habitat to provide public hunting, fishing, hiking, wildlife observation and other outdoor recreation.

Nonpoint Funds: Improve water quality by controlling erosion and runoff (known as nonpoint source pollution) that harm fish and wildlife habitat.

Parks funds: Provide habitat, fishing and hunting programs as well as educational programs about fish and wildlife and outdoor skills.

Wetland Protection Funds: Provide good habitat for fish and wildlife by protecting wetlands.

Wisconsin Natural Resources Magazine: Provided as part of Conservation Patron License benefits. The magazine is also available by subscription to the general public. It provides timely, accurate information to hunters, anglers and other people interested in the state's natural resources.

Budget reductions in 2003-2004

DNR fish, wildlife and other programs funded with the Fish and Wildlife Account needed to cut spending in 2003-04 due to a revenue reduction authorized in the 2003-05 State Biennial Budget. Other chapters in this report offer budget reduction details.

In 2005, as part of his proposed 2005-2007 State Biennial Budget, Governor Jim Doyle included increased hunting and fishing license fees that conservation groups have sought to maintain current conservation programs.

For more information on the Fish & Wildlife Account, the Governor's license fee proposal on behalf of conservation, and why fee increases are needed, please visit the DNR Web site at <http://dnr.wi.gov/invest/>.

General License Fees	\$58.5
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Dedicated Funds

Salmon Stamp	\$1.1
Trout Stamp	1.3
Sturgeon License	0.1
Turkey Stamp	0.7
Pheasant Stamp	0.3
Waterfowl Stamp	0.5
Wildlife Damage	3.5

Total Funds Spent	\$7.5
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Federal/Misc. Funds

Sport Fish Restoration*	\$ 6.7
Pittman Robertson**	4.1
Misc. Grants & Other Sources	5.6

Total Federal/Misc. Funds Spent	\$16.4
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**Total Fish & Wildlife
Account Funds Spent**

\$82.4

Funds Spent on Fish & Wildlife in Wisconsin

Dollars in Millions

FY 2004 Fish and Wildlife Expenditures

* Sport Fish Restoration funds are revenues collected from the manufacturers of fishing rods, reels, creels, lures, flies and artificial baits, who pay an excise tax on these items to the U.S. Treasury. They are distributed each year to the states.

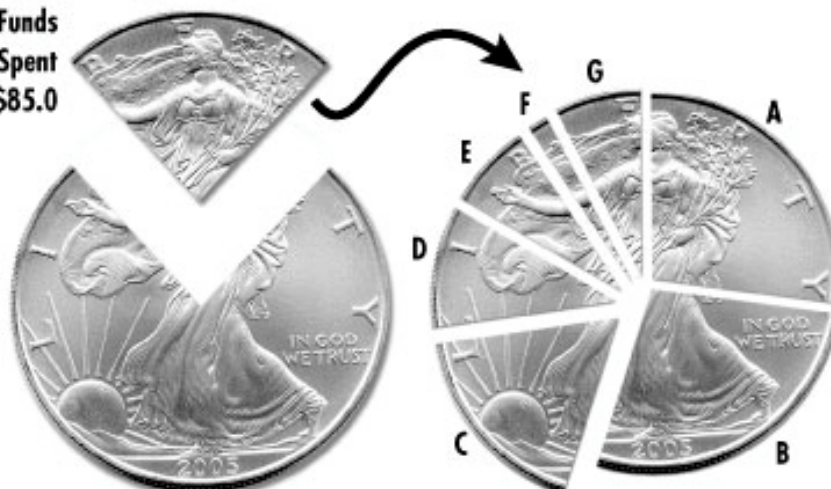
** Pittman Robertson funds are revenues collected from the manufacturers of sporting arms, ammunition, archery equipment and handguns, who pay an excise tax on these items to the U.S. Treasury. They are distributed each year to the states.

Related Funds

Federal Indirect	2.0
Gifts and Donations	0.3
Conservation Aids—Program Admin.	0.3

Total Related Funds Spent	\$ 2.6
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**Total Fish
& Wildlife
Funds
Spent
\$85.0**



Percentage of each Fish & Wildlife Dollar

A Fish	27.0%
B Wildlife	27.8%
C Enforcement	17.9%
D Facilities & Lands	10.6%
E Licenses	7.4%
F Regional Management	1.7%
G Administration	7.6%

\$440.1 Million

Total DNR Expenditures FY04



Fish

Chapter 1

Protecting, improving and managing Wisconsin's fisheries resources and aquatic habitats for the benefit of all the state's citizens.

The Fish and Wildlife Account pays \$23 million or 75 percent of the \$30.7 million fisheries management, research, and habitat protection programs, and 272 of the fisheries program's 346 positions.

The remaining 74 positions and \$7.7 million are provided through general tax funds, federal funding from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, water regulation permits and other fees and federal grants.

How does the Fisheries program use your money?

(in millions of dollars)

Evaluate fish populations and conduct research	8.5
Rear and stock fish	5.5
Protect and improve habitat	3.2
Inform and educate the public	0.5
Develop rules and regulations	0.2
Pay program operations costs	5.1
Total	\$23

How is fisheries work funded?

Funding Source	\$ (in millions)	%
Fish and Wildlife Fund		
License Fees	14.5	47
Sturgeon license	0.1	<1
Salmon Stamp	1.1	4
Trout Stamp	1.4	5
Sport Fish Restoration	4.7	15
Misc. grants and donations	1.2	4
Subtotal - Fish and Wildlife Account	23.0	75
Rest of the Conservation Fund	2.0	6
General taxes (GPR)	5.7	19
Total	30.7	100

What did the Fisheries program accomplish for you in 2003–2004?

Conducted scientifically-based fisheries management work.

We monitored fish populations and angler and commercial harvest, set and evaluated harvest regulations and stocking quotas, planned and implemented habitat restoration and improvement projects, and reviewed stocking, fish farm and water regulation permits. We also conducted educational and cooperative activities with the public, and sampled fish populations

and habitat quality in 2003-2004 on 769 stream sites and 403 lakes.

Maintained a network of fish biologists and technicians across the state.

We maintain 272 fisheries management positions throughout the state. Ninety-three 93 percent are field positions in local offices or hatcheries where staff work directly with area anglers, groups and communities to improve fishing opportunities across Wisconsin.

Improved trout stream habitat.

Using dedicated funds from inland trout stamp revenues supplemented by regular operating funds, in 2003-04, fisheries staff, often working with partner groups, improved 28 miles of trout habitat, bringing to more than 650 the stream miles improved since the program began in 1979. Each year the \$1.1 million raised by the sale of trout stamps and patron licenses is spent to restore and improve 25 to 30 miles of degraded trout streams.

Raised and stocked 10,966,158 fish, and produced 20 million fry for stocking.

We operated 13 state fish hatcheries and rearing stations, three egg collection weirs, and 10 to 15 fish production ponds. We annually produce up to 7.6 million trout and salmon fingerlings and yearlings, up to 5 million musky, walleye, bass, pike and sturgeon fingerlings, and up to 50 million fry for stocking in about 15 percent of state waters.

Assured sustainable walleye populations while accommodating sport fish harvest and court-mandated tribal treaty fishing rights.

In the 30 northern counties the Chippewa ceded to the U.S. government in 1854, we implemented federally-required monitoring of walleye and musky fish populations, and state and tribal harvest in the ceded territory's 860 walleye and 665 musky lakes. Comprehensive monitoring ensures that fish populations are not overharvested and remain healthy.

Monitored Great Lakes sport and commercial fish populations and harvest.

Fisheries staff working in Lake Michigan and Lake Superior operate three large vessels, set harvest quotas and regulations, set and evaluate stocking quotas, and cooperate with other states and provinces. Sales of the Great Lakes Salmon and Trout stamp provide funds for fish stocking, which is needed to maintain salmon and trout fisheries.

Protect critical habitat and provide fishing access; maintain boat launches and shore-fishing piers

Over the years, we've acquired almost 120,000 acres of fishery lands and stream easements. In 2003-2004, we worked with DNR lands staff to acquire 1,102 acres at \$2,914,981 for state public fishery areas.

Sampled fish populations for mercury, PCBs and other potentially harmful contaminants.

We have documented that the vast majority of waters in Wisconsin have large populations of fish that are very healthy to eat on a regular basis. Each year we publish a fish health advisory for sport caught fish which identifies those waters or species and sizes of fish for which anglers should avoid or limit their fish consumption. In 2003-2004, we sampled fish from 79 locations in 55 waters.

Trained a network of volunteer aquatic education instructors and sponsored clinics.

Today's children are tomorrow's anglers and stewards of our aquatic resources. In 2003-2004, we provided workshops that trained 160 people who introduced more than 6,000 children to fishing and aquatic resources. Fisheries staff also sponsored kids fishing clinics and education classes.

Made sure you had the latest information on fish, aquatic resources, fishing opportunities, and DNR programs.

We did this by maintaining a comprehensive Web pages on the DNR Web site at www.fishingwisconsin.org, which has links to recent news releases, staff directories, searchable fish stocking, fish population and creel survey databases, places to go fishing, lands and access directories, the latest fishing information, and DNR publications and reports. We also published regulation summaries, informational brochures, maps and educational materials and a spring Fishing Forecast newspaper.

Budget reductions in 2003-2004

Here are actions the DNR fisheries program took to reduce operations costs, and to carry out budget reductions required in the 2003-05 State Biennial Budget:

Fewer field staff: 27 field biologist and technician positions remained unfilled to save money in 2003-04; eight of these positions were cut in 2004-05. Less fisheries work occurred in some locations as a result.

Less field work: Fewer fishery surveys were done on inland lakes and streams, warm water habitat projects were reduced 50 percent, and trout habitat work was reduced 20 percent. No new fishing piers were developed.

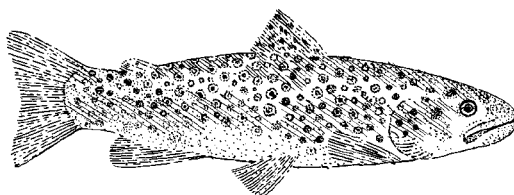
Fish stocking reduced: The Langlade Fish Hatchery was closed. Musky and northern pike stocking was reduced, walleye stocking in lakes with natural reproduction was eliminated, and stocking of lower-return trout strains in the Great Lakes was cut.

Where are we going in 2004-2005?

If hunting and fishing license fees are increased as proposed in Governor Jim Doyle's 2005-07 State Biennial Budget, we will fill 12 of the 20 total vacant fish biologist and technician positions. The remaining eight positions have already been eliminated to meet previous budget reductions.

Conduct scientifically-based fisheries management work. We will continue assessing lake and stream health by monitoring fish communities and aquatic habitat, and carrying out other management activities.

Raise and stock fish. Costs for fish food, transportation, and rock used to rebuild fish habitat continue to climb. Engineering and design plans will be drawn to renovate the aging Wild Rose Fish Hatchery. If funding shortages remain an issue, we will prepare to close one to two additional fish production facilities and further reduce inland trout, Great Lakes trout, musky and walleye stocking.





Wildlife

Chapter 2

Preserving, promoting and managing Wisconsin's wildlife populations and their habitats and promoting wildlife enjoyment and appreciation to benefit current and future generations

The Fish & Wildlife Account pays for \$23.6 million or 86 percent of the \$27.6 million spent on wildlife programs, including 187 of the 211 positions assigned to wildlife programs.

The remaining 24 positions and \$4 million are funded through general tax funds, the Endangered Resources state income tax check-off and state vehicle license plate sales, federal and state grants and the rest of the Conservation Fund.

How does the Wildlife program use your money?

(in millions of dollars)

Conduct research and monitor diseases	6.8
Develop regulations, issue permits, reimburse farmers for crop damage	5.6
Improve habitat and monitor wildlife populations	4.1
Manage public lands	1.8
Stock game species	0.6
Inform and educate the public	1.4
Pay program operations costs (equipment, repairs, maintenance, fuel, etc.)	3.3
Total	\$23.6

FY04 Wildlife Funding Sources

Funding Source	\$ (in millions)	%
Fish & Wildlife Account		
License Fees	11.3	41
Turkey Stamp	0.7	3
Pheasant Stamp	0.3	1
Waterfowl Stamp	0.5	2
Pittman Robertson Federal Aid	4.0	14
Wildlife damage surcharge	3.5	13
Misc. grants and donations	3.3	12
Fish & Wildlife Account Subtotal	23.6	86
Rest of Conservation Fund	2.5	9
General Taxes (GPR)	1.5	5
Total	27.6	100

What did the Wildlife program accomplish for you in 2003–2004?

Chronic Wasting Disease control: Maintaining the health of Wisconsin's white-tailed deer herd by controlling chronic wasting disease (CWD) is the top priority for the wildlife program. Research, disease surveillance, public outreach, and aggressive deer population reduction strategies remain keys to our efforts to eradicate the disease.

CWD is a statewide issue. Although confined to two areas in southern Wisconsin, the department is confident that if nothing is done, the disease will continue to spread geographically. Colorado, Wyoming and Nebraska, where CWD also is present, already show this pattern.

Economically, deer hunting supports thousands of jobs in Wisconsin and is estimated to contribute close to \$1 billion to the state's economy. The wildlife program is committed to doing everything it can to control the spread of CWD and eventually eradicate it.

Managing wildlife populations: We worked with citizens and conservation groups to set quotas, hunting rules and regulations. We responded to 6,499 complaints about nuisance wildlife and received 3,590 contacts to the Urban Wildlife Program. Wildlife Management issued 372 permits to raise, rehabilitate, stock and collect game species.

Improve habitat and manage wildlife species: Our staff restored wetlands, maintained grasslands and forest openings, and built nests, dams, and other structures to create or enhance habitat on five million acres of publicly-owned land and about 18,600 acres of privately-owned land. Staff provided technical assistance enabling 1,570 landowners to improve habitat on their land.

Manage public lands: We improved access by leasing 125,942 acres as public hunting grounds and acquiring 9,939 acres for long-term wildlife management. Our wildlife staff manage about 500,000 acres of hunter-accessible public lands to provide suitable habitat for game species.

Stock game species: While we stress maintaining healthy, naturally-reproducing wildlife populations by enhancing habitat, stocking operations also are important for certain species. We raised and released 36,020 pheasants on 153 state properties and provided 53,000 day-old chicks to 73 conservation and hunting groups that raise and release the birds.

Reimburse farmers for wildlife damage: We issued 667 shooting permits and paid \$1.8 million in claims—a dollar from every license and all bonus permit sales revenue -- to farmers for crops damaged by bear, deer, elk, geese and turkeys in 2003. There were 7,160 deer harvested on shooting permits.

Inform and educate the public: Our interpretive programs and outdoor skills classes reached more than 33,572 people ranging from toddlers to senior citizens. We reached the broader public through media articles and interviews, and by answering questions at fairs, sports shows and Farm Technology Days.

Venison donations: Wisconsin hunters donated 10,938 deer to the 2004 Venison Donation Program, resulting in approximately 500,000 pounds of meat donated to needy families across Wisconsin.

Budget reductions in 2003-2004

- To reduce operations costs, and to carry out budget reductions required in the 2003-05 State Biennial Budget, the Wildlife program:
- Reduced pheasant stocking on public hunting grounds 65 percent.
- Reduced wildlife population surveys and habitat maintenance and improvement projects.
- Cut nature and education programs 50 percent.
- Reduced assistance for wildlife nuisance complaints.
- Terminated many public hunting ground leases.

Where are we going in 2004–2005?

Habitat protection and development: We will continue to emphasize habitat improvement efforts, using partnerships to stretch the funds provided through the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Fund, species stamps, North American Waterfowl Conservation Act, and other sources.

Bird Conservation: The DNR has renewed its commitment to conserving the greater prairie chicken and grassland ecosystems with the approval of an updated Greater Prairie Chicken Management Plan. The DNR has continued to work with over 130 conservation partners to further the efforts of the Wisconsin Bird Conservation Initiative (WBCI). WBCI has been very active spearheading a comprehensive bird conservation plan for the state, identifying Wisconsin's Important Bird Areas (IBAs), offering a number of bird conservation-related workshops, and furthering and expanding partner efforts for bird conservation. WBCI announced a small grants program starting in November 2004, and has dedicated money and efforts toward the greater prairie chicken effort in central Wisconsin.

CWD efforts: The department is using a learn-and-adapt approach to managing CWD by basing management strategies on research and surveillance findings as the information becomes available. During the 2004-05 deer hunting season, disease surveillance efforts focused in and around the two disease eradication zones, southeast Wisconsin and areas near CWD-positive game farms.

The department has sampled 75,000 deer for CWD since 2002, when the disease was first discovered in the state. Although the total CWD-affected area currently covers more than 1,300 square miles, more than 80 percent of CWD-positive deer have come from a 126-square-mile area bounded by Spring Green, Mazomanie, Black Earth, Mount Horeb and Ridgeway.

Herd reduction is a key way to manage CWD and we continue to rely on the cooperation of hunters and landowners to achieve reduce the herd. Staff liaisons making door-to-door

contacts with landowners, landowner and hunter surveys, public information pieces, incentive programs, a toll-free CWD information phone line, and other mechanisms are in place to help us stay in touch with landowners and hunters, address their concerns and desires, and foster support for CWD management strategies.

To safeguard Wisconsin's deer-hunting tradition and protect its economic, cultural and ecological importance, the department remains committed to eradicating CWD from Wisconsin, though eradication will be a long-term process requiring a lot of resources.

Customer Service: In FY 2005, we will be working to implement deer season and regulation streamlining recommendations, which were developed this past year in response to requests from deer hunters to simplify deer regulations. Additionally, we will continue to provide customers with information on captive wildlife-related licenses and regulations. Finally, we will strive to improve accessibility to the various hunting and trapping regulations and find ways to help customers understand these regulations.

Wildlife research: Studies under way include:

- an investigation of wild duck productivity on private wetlands and grasslands in southern Wisconsin where habitat has been restored;
- a study testing methods to regenerate oak forests for wildlife and the entire oak ecosystem;
- a study of the effects of mercury on common loon populations
- evaluating grassland bird management on large landscapes;
- evaluation of biological control of purple loosestrife to restore native vegetation beneficial to wildlife;
- a large-scale study to determine ways to manage northern hardwood forests to accommodate more wildlife needs and increase biological diversity;
- a study to determine habitat needs for the golden-winged warbler;
- a number of studies investigating CWD and the effectiveness of CWD management;
- more than 60 annual surveys monitoring the size and harvest of wildlife populations; and
- an evaluation of deer population monitoring by assessing sex-age-kill population estimates, harvest predictions and other deer population models.



Law Enforcement

Chapter 3

Ensuring the right of all people to safely use, share and enjoy Wisconsin's natural resources through firm, fair and effective law enforcement, education, and partnerships with individuals and groups.

The Fish and Wildlife Account pays for \$15.3 million or 64 percent of the law enforcement program's \$23.7 million budget and 154 of its 226 positions.

The remaining 72 positions and \$8.4 million are provided through the Environmental Fund, Recycling Fund, boat, snowmobile and ATV registration fees, Federal grants, general tax funds and the rest of the Conservation Fund.

Where does your Fish and Wildlife money go?

(in millions of dollars)

Enforce fishing hunting and trapping laws	12.8
Inform and educate the public	0.2
Provide hunter education	0.9
Manage car-killed deer disposal	0.4
Pay program operations costs	0.9
Total	\$15.2

How is law enforcement work funded?

Funding Source	\$ (in millions)	%
Fish and Wildlife Fund		
License Fees	14.3	61
Federal Grants-Pittman Robertson Hunter Safety	0.9	3
Subtotal, Fish and Wildlife Fund	15.2	64
Rest of the Conservation Fund	3.8	15
General Taxes (GPR)	3.4	15
Environmental Fund	1.1	5
Recycling Fund	0.1	1
Total	23.6	100

What did the Law Enforcement program accomplish for you in 2003-2004?

Enforce wildlife, fish and trapping laws:

Conservation wardens protect Wisconsin's natural resources and help ensure fair hunting, fishing and trapping opportunities. We check hunters, anglers and trappers for the required licenses, and ensure that people follow Wisconsin bag and season limits and laws governing methods of taking game.

Wardens are responsible for reviewing applications and conducting inspections and audits in connection with special permits and licenses.

Wardens field thousands of citizen complaints about poaching and other violations of

hunting, fishing and public safety regulations annually. Wardens rely on the public to be a key player in the apprehension of people who take advantage of the State's natural resources. Wardens also protect habitat and public health by enforcing environmental and recreational safety laws with funds from other funding sources.

Wardens continue to assist in department efforts to combat chronic wasting disease by enforcing baiting and feeding laws, inspecting fences at all deer farms in the state, removing escaped captive deer from the landscape and other population reduction efforts. This work will remain important in the future if we are to reduce the potential for future outbreaks.

We also continue to annually re-certify our wardens in new laws, investigative techniques, firearm skills and proficiency. Warden supervisors coach and direct field wardens to ensure our resources are used efficiently and effectively and laws are enforced fairly and consistently across the state.

Inform and educate the public: Informing people about Wisconsin's fish and wildlife regulations is an important part of our duties. In addition to one-on-one contact, wardens present this information at schools, conservation clubs, civic organizations and other group meetings and work with radio, TV and newspapers. Often wardens have regular columns in local newspapers to share timely information about regulations. Wardens also worked at the State Fair, Ducks Unlimited Great Outdoors Festival and local county fairs. These efforts allow wardens to reach over several million people each year.

Provide hunter education: An important priority for our law enforcement program is to continue to promote responsible conduct among natural resource users.

Wisconsin's hunting accident rate has fallen 90 percent since our Hunter Safety program began in 1967. The 2004 deer season was also the safest deer season on record, with only five hunting-related accidents. More than 818,000 students have graduated from Wisconsin's hunter education courses in the last 37 years. Wisconsin DNR boasts the largest instructor corps in North America (approximately 5,000 volunteers) that teach classes. Wardens assist in recruiting new instructors to coordinate the program, publicize safe hunting practices and make presentations during class time.

The department has developed and offers alternate ways to help people obtain hunter

education certifications, such as through the Internet. While these delivery methods are useful, we do require that students completing a hunter education course this way complete one field day for training and evaluation so we can assess how prepared they are for using firearms while hunting. The hunter education program also provides access to shooting ranges through cooperative efforts with clubs.

Manage vehicle-killed deer disposal: In recent years, vehicle-deer crashes have killed more than 45,000 deer each year. We contract to have unclaimed deer hauled away from the roadside and disposed of. In 2003-04, we awarded contracts worth \$625,000 -- half of which comes from general tax revenue -- to dispose of deer across the state.

Pay program operation costs: Planning enforcement work, cooperating with other DNR programs, and paying for equipment, repairs, gas, insurance and salary adjustments are all vital to getting the job done. Without these basic services and tools, our wardens stationed statewide would not be able to do their jobs of protecting wildlife and habitat.

Budget reductions in 2003-2004

Fewer conservation wardens: To reduce operations costs, and to carry out budget reductions required in the 2003-05 State Biennial Budget, no new recruit wardens were hired in 2003 or 2004. Consequently, we'll go into 2005 with nearly 30 vacancies. A small recruit class was hired in 2005, but we anticipate five additional retirements that year -- leading to approximately 24 vacancies into 2006. Filling these vacancies will be a priority in order to ensure protection of Wisconsin's natural resources and the safety of people who enjoy them.

Reduced incident responses by wardens: Budget constraints also are significantly reducing the response capacity of the warden service. For example, in 2004 our field operations budget was 8 percent less than it was in 1994, without any adjustments for inflation. At the same time, mileage rates have increased 16 percent since 1994.

Where are we going in 2004–2005?

Enforce wildlife, fishing, trapping laws: 2005 starts the 126th year of Wisconsin's warden service. The warden force has adjusted to changing times and we are proud to continue protecting Wisconsin's natural resources and those who enjoy them.

Local focus: We will continue to focus on "community wardening," which encourages conservation wardens to become actively involved in local organizations and in building partnerships with citizens, public officials, media, legislators and private and public groups in their area.

Promoting the future of hunting, fishing and trapping: Wardens will spend more time promoting enjoyable outdoor experiences to help pass on the outdoor legacy to future generations.

Protect natural resources: Wardens will continue to devote more effort to preventing the commercialization of natural resources, and to stem the introduction of exotic and invasive species to protect Wisconsin's outdoor heritage and its tourism-related economy.

Recruit wardens to fill vacancies: A small new class of recruits was hired in 2005, which will start the process of refilling depleted ranks. Whether other vacancies can be filled depends on lawmakers' approval of proposed increases in hunting and fishing license fees. For more information on this issue, please visit the DNR Web site at <http://dnr.wi.gov/invest>.

We will continue to make the best use of available technologies to help us perform our duties and serve the public as efficiently and quickly as possible.

In addition to fish and game funding sources, other funding sources provide for 93 other conservation wardens and staff who, in addition to fish and game duties, devote time to habitat, environmental protection and recreational public safety duties that benefit all citizens and our natural resources.



Facilities and Lands

Chapter 4

Buying, planning, and managing land, buildings, boat ramps, and other recreational facilities so all citizens can enjoy Wisconsin's beauty and outdoor recreation.

The Fish & Wildlife Account pays for \$9 million or 18 percent of the \$50.1 million facilities and lands program and 52 of its 117 positions.

The remaining 65 positions and \$41.1 million are provided through the Conservation Fund, General Tax Funds, Environmental Fund, Recycling Fund, Petroleum Storage Cleanup Fund, Clean Water Fund as well as the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Fund and Federal Grants.

Where does your Fish & Wildlife money go?

Acquire public land for hunting fishing and boating access sites

Plan for public use of lands and facilities

Manage and maintain DNR lands

Design and build recreational and public use facilities

How is the Facilities and Lands program funded?

Funding Source	\$ (in millions)	%
Fish & Wildlife Account	9.0	18
Rest of Conservation Fund	21.1	42
General Tax Fund	17.7	36
Environmental Fund	1.3	2
Recycling Fund	0.2	<1
Petroleum Storage Cleanup Fund	0.5	1
Clean Water Fund	0.3	1
Total	50.1	100

What was accomplished with your money in 2003–2004?

Acquire land: In 2003–04, we purchased 18,381 acres and secured easements on an additional 2,777 acres of land for a total cost of \$36 million. These purchases included large additions to properties such as Jefferson Marsh Wildlife Area, Lake Mills Wildlife Area and the Rainbow Flowage. This brings the department's ownership to over 1.4 million acres with about 90 percent of the land open for hunting, fishing and related recreational access.

Plan for public use of lands and facilities: We work with citizens to develop "master plans" that identify activities allowed on certain properties -- from building roads and parking areas to managing wildlife habitat and timber -- and what the land will look like 10, 20 and 30 years down the road.

In 2003-04, we completed studies for the development and expansion of Harrington Beach and Tommy G. Thompson state parks, Central Wisconsin Grasslands Conservation Area, White River Fisheries Area in Bayfield County, and the Crex Meadows/Governor Knowles State Forest expansion and a special Land Legacy Implementation Strategy to help identify land acquisition and facility priorities that could be financed through Wisconsin's Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Fund. We also continued master planning efforts for the Lower Wolf River Bottoms and the Northern Highlands/American Legion State Forest, Rib Mountain, Capitol Springs and Buckhorn state parks, Military Ridge Heritage Trail, Lower Black River Natural Resource Area, and Jefferson County Conservation and Recreation Area.

Manage and maintain department lands:

Ensuring that people have a safe, enjoyable experience on public conservation and recreation lands requires a lot of behind-the-scenes work. Tasks range from maintaining parking lots, roads, bridges, and campgrounds to sampling well water, managing portable-toilet contracts, assuring access to facilities for people with disabilities and enforcing regulations on properties.

We are responsible for developing basic management policies and procedures for all

department properties, including the 1 million acres that make up the state's wildlife and fishery areas. Our facilities and lands staff manages the land on 152 Fishery Areas, several major flowages and river ways, and hundreds of DNR-owned public boat access sites.

Design and build recreational facilities:

People need roads, parking lots, trails, boat launches and restrooms to enjoy department-owned land. We work with other state agencies and with consultants and contractors to facilitate the design and construction of these structures. In 2003–04, we took 330 projects through the budget and design process and oversaw construction on a similar number of projects, including 21 new boat access projects.

Budget reductions in 2003-2004

To reduce spending, the Facilities and Lands program stopped posting boundaries and maintaining roads on public lands.

Where are we going in 2004-2005?

We are anticipating reductions in our 2005-2007 budget: the loss of 1.6 full time staff, less in road and building development dollars and in operations. This means we will not complete or we will defer some road and building improvements and land maintenance activities.

However, the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Fund remains fully funded and allows us to continue to acquire land for the public's use and benefit, and make grants to local governments for conservation purposes.

Land acquisitions: Acquire 15,000-plus acres across the state, many within fishery or wildlife areas.

Construction projects: Complete work on approved 2003–2005 capital development budget projects. This means we expect to complete about 300 development projects, including 25 boat access site renovations and new developments.

Property planning: The Lower Wolf River Bottomlands master planning will be continued. We expect to complete master plans for Northern Highland/American Legion State Forest, Capitol Springs, Rib Mountain and Buckhorn state parks. We will be continuing preparatory planning work for the Black River and Peshtigo River state forests.

The department will continue implementing the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Fund, which was reauthorized in 2000 and has \$60 million a year approved through the state budget process. This funding will help offset higher acquisition and development costs caused by rising land prices, and ensure the department's ability to obtain and develop significant properties for public enjoyment and natural resource protection.



Licenses

Chapter 5

Working to provide anglers and hunters with convenient ways to buy licenses, register their boats and get quick, consistent answers to their questions about regulations, licenses and natural resources.

The Fish & Wildlife Account pays for 56 percent of the \$11.1 million license program and 66 of its 129 positions.

The remaining 63 positions and \$4.8 million are provided through general tax funds, the environmental fund, and the boat, all-terrain vehicle and snowmobile accounts of the Conservation Fund.

Where does your Fish & Wildlife money go?

- Sell hunting, fishing, trapping licenses
- Issue special wildlife harvest permits
- Issue commercial farm and occupational licenses
- Keep customers and license agents informed
- Pay program operations costs

How is the license program funded?

Funding Source	\$ (in millions)	%
Fish & Wildlife Account	6.3	57
Rest of Conservation Fund	3.8	34
General Fund	0.9	8
Environmental Fund	0.1	1
Total	11.1	100

What did Licensing accomplish with your money in 2003–2004?

Sell hunting, fishing, trapping and other licenses: Through the use of an Automated License Issuance System (ALIS), the DNR issues licenses, permits and stamps for hunting, fishing and trapping.

This system enables customers to purchase their licenses over the counter from approximately 1,500 license agents located in Wisconsin, Minnesota, Illinois and Iowa as well as from the 31 DNR service centers. Customers have the option of purchasing their licenses by phone or over the Internet. Staff also manage license revocations in the ALIS database.

The DNR Hunting & Fishing License Internet Sales site allows the customer to print many different types of licenses on their home printers. (Licenses that require a back tag

and/or carcass tag may be purchased online but will be delivered to the customer by mail). Customer response to the Internet sales site continues to increase and it is becoming a very popular method of purchasing licenses.

The department is able to access vital marketing information using its customer database and to track sales trends and statistics. The automated system also promptly deposits revenue from the sale of licenses through an electronic transfer of funds. Another service we have been able to provide hunters is the opportunity to renew recreational vehicle registrations online 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Issue special wildlife harvest permits:

DNR administers nine hunting and/or trapping permit programs. Through an application and drawing process, customers are required to obtain permits, in addition to hunting or trapping licenses and stamps, to pursue antlerless deer, turkey, bear, goose, sharp-tailed grouse, bobcat, otter and fisher. Customers can choose to submit their permit application choices over the Internet or by mail.

Customers can also visit the DNR Web site to determine whether they were awarded a permit and check their ongoing preference status for each drawing. New this year, customers received their turkey carcass tags when they purchased their turkey hunting license and stamp, eliminating the need for DNR to send permits by mail.

Number of licensed hunters and anglers

(depicts growth and seasonal fluctuations)

FY	Hunters	Anglers	Total
1999-00	769,420	1,374,185	2,143,605
2000-01	773,239	1,393,630	2,166,869
2001-02	763,063	1,430,714	2,193,777
2002-03	689,099	1,394,630	2,083,729
2003-04	716,200	1,413,804	2,130,004

Issue commercial farm and occupational licenses:

Customer Service issues various captive wildlife licenses and occupational/business licenses, including guide, taxidermist, bait dealer, fur dealer, wholesale fish dealer, and Mississippi River commercial fishing licenses.

Educate customers and license agents:

The licensing database provides our staff with up-to-date information so they can assist both internal and external customers. We maintain information on the DNR Web site and develop handouts and brochures that educate

customers. Our staff is responsible for distributing millions of regulation pamphlets, maps and other informational brochures to both license agents and our customers. We will continue to partner with representatives of agents and collect feedback from customers to identify and improve tools used to share information with customers and license agents.

Pay program operation costs: Planning licensing work, securing technical services, cooperating with other DNR programs, paying for equipment and repairs and covering insurance and salaries are all vital to getting the job done.

Budget reductions in 2003-2004

The Customer Service and Licensing program cut staff, discontinued customer services at some field locations and reduced hours at most service centers to reduce spending and meet budget cuts.

Where are we going in 2004-2005?**Introduce improvements to licensing system:**

In 2004, the department will begin issuing Chronic Wasting Deer Removal Permits through ALIS. These permits were previously issued manually by Wildlife staff. Opportunities to partner with other programs to use our automated system for delivering non-traditional fish and wildlife permits are being explored.

Use technology to improve customer service:

We will continue to explore opportunities to provide services to our customers via the Internet.

Issue special wildlife harvest permits: We will continue to find ways to streamline how permits are issued. One example will be to use the automated license system to issue Antlerless Bonus permits. These permits will only be issued over the counter on a first-come first-served basis, eliminating the need to issue permits by mail.



Regional Management

Chapter 6

Providing leadership and direction to Land, Enforcement, Water and other staff in regions and local geographic areas

The Fish & Wildlife Account pays for about 27 percent or \$1.4 million of the \$5.1 million the department spends on regional management and 14 of its 52 positions.

The remaining 38 positions and \$3.7 million are provided through general purpose tax revenue, environmental funds, and the rest of the Conservation Fund.

How is regional management funded?

Funding source	\$ (in millions)	%
Fish & Wildlife Account	1.4	27
Rest of Conservation Fund	0.7	13
General Fund	2.9	57
Environmental Fund	0.1	3
Total	5.1	100

Where does your Fish & Wildlife money go?

Maintain contact with local government, conservation groups and citizens on fish and wildlife issues

Direct department field staff and the work they do in local geographic areas

Develop and lead citizen partnership teams in local geographic areas

Oversee consistency of decisions and policies across regions

What did your money accomplish in 2003–2004?

Maintain contact with citizens on fish and wildlife issues: Our field managers continue to work on numerous projects with a wide range of partners that include local conservation clubs, civic organizations, nonprofit groups, government agencies, and statewide or national organizations.

Contact with hunters, anglers and other citizens, gathering input on decisions, clarifying department policies and initiatives and answering citizens' questions are high priorities.

Direct field staff and the work they do: Our managers provide leadership and direction to all DNR field staff—including those in fish, wildlife, enforcement and licensing—as these

employees make daily decisions affecting natural resources in local geographic areas.

Develop and lead local partnerships: The DNR supports local partnerships that pull together people and organizations interested in natural resources. Many partnerships work to restore habitats, manage local natural resources and collect essential data for planning. Some work to influence natural resource policies.

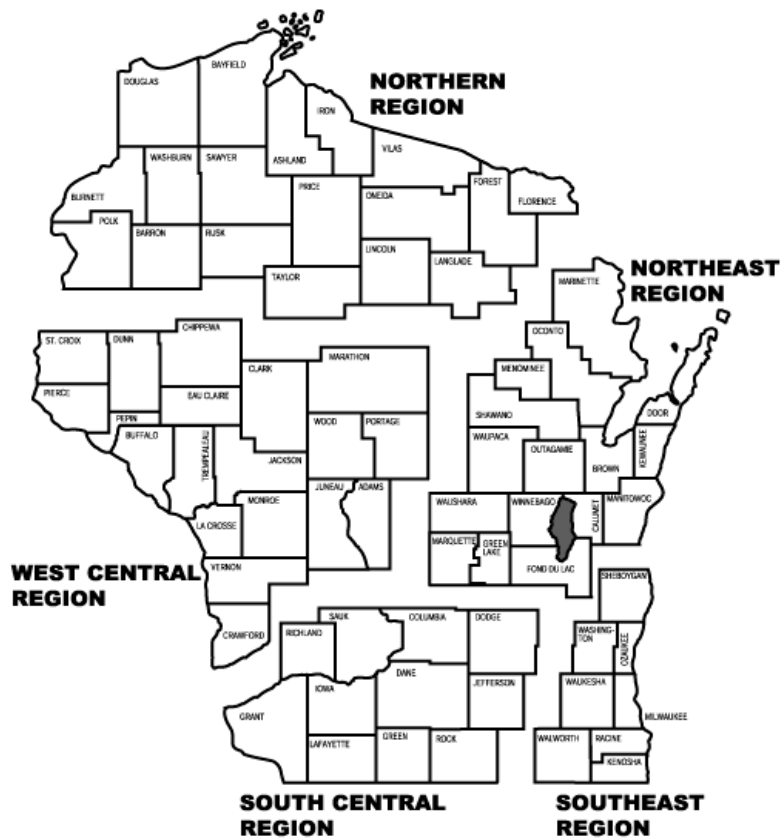
Oversee consistency of decisions and policies across Regions: Field managers work to build consistency in policy and practice across regional boundaries, working for the equitable treatment of all Wisconsin's citizens.

Where are we going in 2004–2005?

Direct field staff and the work they do.

Continue building partnerships in local geographic areas: Efforts continue to refine and improve partnerships, share information and decision making with partners, and move forward to implement the recommendations of these teams.

Manage for consistent application of policy across programs and the state: Maintain communication across programs and regions to ensure consistent policy application.





Administration and Support

Chapter 7

The business function of the department provides direction and support that helps the rest of the department's programs function

The Fish & Wildlife Account paid 21 percent* or \$6.5 million of the department's \$31.6 million administration and support budget and 84 of its 354 positions.

The remaining 270 positions and \$25.1 million are provided through general purpose tax revenue, the Environmental Fund, Clean Water Fund, Recycling Fund, Petroleum Storage Cleanup Fund, Dry Cleaner Fund, and the rest of the Conservation Fund.

*Note: The 21 percent figure is a portion of the DNR's entire budget, which includes the Fish and Wildlife Account and many other funding sources. The actual percentage of the Fish and Wildlife Account spent on administration and support is much lower, as required by law. Under Wisconsin statutes, DNR spending from the Fish and Wildlife Account to cover administrative costs may not exceed 16 percent of expenditures from the Fish and Wildlife Account in a fiscal year.

Administration and support (Chapter 7 of this report) expenditures from the Fish and Wildlife Account for 2003-2004 totaled \$6.5 million, or 7.6 percent of total Fish and Wildlife Account expenditures that fiscal year. Regional Management costs (Chapter 6) also are administrative costs. Regional Management expenditures for 2003-2004

totaled \$1.4 million, or 1.6 percent of total Fish & Wildlife Account spending that year.

How is Administration funded?

Funding source	\$ (in millions)	%
Fish & Wildlife Account	6.5	21
Rest of Conservation Fund	12.1	38
General Fund	9.1	29
Environmental Fund	1.5	5
Recycling Fund	0.4	1
Petroleum Storage Cleanup Fund	0.1	<1
Clean Water Fund	1.8	6
Dry Cleaner Fund	0.1	<1
Total	31.6	100

Where does your Fish & Wildlife money go?

Meet with fishing and hunting organizations, government agencies, legislators and the public

Provide legal services

Administer programs funded by fish and wildlife account

Manage collective bargaining, recruiting and hiring

Provide computer support and develop technology solutions for government and public needs

Pay bills and manage payroll, benefits and financial records

Communicate with the public, educate children, reach teachers and involve citizens in decisions

Manage and distribute grants

Provide mail services and distribute publications

Combined, spending from the Fish and Wildlife Account on administration and support, plus regional management, totaled \$7.9 million in 2003-2004, or 9.3 percent of total expenditures from the Fish and Wildlife Account. That puts those expenditures well within the 16 percent maximum state statutes mandate.

Budget reductions in 2003-2004

Fourteen positions were eliminated from administration and support functions funded by the Fish & Wildlife Account during the two-year state budget period, 2003-2005.

What did your money accomplish in 2003-2004?

Meet with fishing and hunting organizations, government agencies, legislators and the public: Significant amounts of time again were spent this year meeting and talking with partners on Wisconsin natural resource issues, programs and funding.

Future of hunting, fishing and trapping: The department continued work outlined in the Future of Hunting, Fishing and Trapping 2020 Plan. More than 1,000 people participated in more than 50 "Learn to Hunt" programs and 136 angler education programs and clinics, including 7,764 youths. In addition, three Wisconsin angler education instructors received \$5,000 Physical Education grants to implement or enhance fishing in their school curricula, and conservation partners were able to keep open over 30,000 acres of leased public hunting lands in southeastern Wisconsin through donations and grants.

Provide legal services: Our legal services staff draft administrative rules and statutory language; develop contracts for land purchases, animal damage and land rights; interpret laws and represent fish and wildlife programs in a variety of legal actions.

Administer programs funded by Fish & Wildlife Account: Administrators lead and direct the staff who perform the services that support Wisconsin's fish and wildlife programs. They work with the Natural Resources Board, Governor's Office, Legislature, Wisconsin's members of Congress, local, state and federal government agencies and numerous conservation and natural resources organizations and citizens.

Manage our workforce: 829 of the 2,823.75 employees who work for the DNR are funded by Fish & Wildlife dollars. We have a strong commitment to our staff, who work diligently to protect Wisconsin's hunting and fishing heritage. Our leadership development training program prepares current employees to become leaders in carrying out the department's mission in the future.

Provide support for technology that continues to play an important role: Recommend standards for computer equipment and programming that help staff manage species and habitat, provide efficient enforcement of laws and move us toward e-government where information, licenses and other services are readily available to citizens online.

More of the DNR's information and services are being designed for the Internet for customer convenience and to reduce costs. Citizens can now use the Internet to review and comment on agency rulemaking, subscribe to receive weekly news packets, purchase hunting and fishing licenses, and check on preference winner status or the results of deer sampling. You can also visit the DNR Web site to learn more about how the department uses your hunting and fishing license fees at dnr.wi.gov/invest.

Pay bills and manage payroll, benefits and financial records: Maintaining good financial records, managing efficient financial processes and systems, paying bills and providing payroll and benefits to our employees are vital to our organization. With current budget conditions, continued administrative efficiency remains critical.

Communicate with media, citizens and teachers and involve citizens in decisions:

Our weekly news packet, including several special editions on chronic wasting disease, hunting and fishing, was sent to 1,000 media outlets that published or broadcast stories reaching citizens statewide. We began moving toward electronic distribution to save printing and mailing costs.

Wisconsin Natural Resources magazine, which covers all of its own staff, production, distribution and promotion costs from subscription revenues. Now in its 28th year of publishing, the magazine has a paid circulation of 114,000. Its Web site, www.wnrmag.com has links to every story included in the magazine since 1995. The site receives about 700,000 visits a year, and is popular for browsing and research. The magazine also sends out free monthly electronic newsletters to interested subscribers sharing interesting and timely information.

Environmental Education for Kids (EEK!)

our award-winning online magazine for kids (dnr.wi.gov/EEK), continues to help children both in school and at home learn more about Wisconsin's natural resources. EEK! recorded more than 1.5 million user sessions in 2004. It continues to be popular with both children and their teachers. The DNR supports educational content of the TV program for kids, *Into the Outdoors*, produced with Discover Media Works, Inc., won its second Emmy award and began its fifth year of broadcast on commercial TV stations in Wisconsin and neighboring states.

"Dear DNR for kids: "I am a 4th grade teacher in Rhinelander, Wisconsin. I have used your site for quite a few years to enable my students to get information about state plants and animals so they can use technology to create a group "field guide" as a science/technology project. Thanks for the great info that kids can understand."

Manage and distribute grants: Local government and nonprofit groups, clubs and individual citizens play important roles in protecting and enhancing Wisconsin's environment and providing recreational opportunities. We manage and distribute Fish & Wildlife Account funds as grants to help others improve habitat, acquire land and protect stream banks.

Provide mail services and distribute publications: Our mail and publications staff make sure our customers get the publications they request. We also are responsible for delivering mail to the DNR central office in Madison, our 31 service centers and other state and federal agencies. In 2004 we distributed about 3.8 million fishing, deer hunting, small game hunting, trapping, boating, snowmobile, ATV and various other regulation pamphlets plus 4.7 million publications and forms. We also sent class materials for about 52,800 students in hunter, boating, ATV and snowmobile law enforcement safety programs.

Wisconsin

Department of Natural Resources

MISSION

To protect and enhance our natural resources:
our air, land and water;
our wildlife, fish and forests
and the ecosystems that sustain all life.

To provide a healthy, sustainable environment
and a full range of outdoor opportunities.

To ensure the right of all people
to use and enjoy these resources
in their work and leisure.

To work with people
to understand each other's views
and to carry out the public will.

And in this partnership
consider the future and generations to follow.

Wisconsin's Fish and Wildlife Annual Report

If you have suggestions or comments about this publication, please send them to

CE/8
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Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
P.O. Box 7921
Madison, WI 53707-79

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